Amendments to the Claims

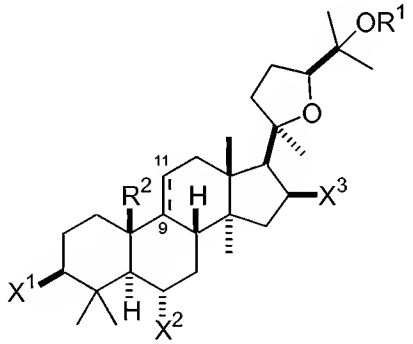
Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended.

Applicants note that the Restriction Requirement is apparently based on the original PCT claims. However, the claims have been twice amended since the PCT filing, first under Article 34 of the PCT, in an amendment filed with the IPEA/US on July 12, 2005, and subsequently on entering the National Stage in the US, in a Preliminary Amendment filed with the USPTO on December 23, 2005. Copies of both amendments are enclosed. (The IPER showing the claims amended under Article 34, and the subsequent Preliminary Amendment, are also both available on Public PAIR.)

The amendments below use the claims as amended on December 23, 2005 as a starting point.

1. (Original) A method for conditioning the skin, comprising:

applying topically to the skin a formulation comprising a compound of formula **I**:



I

where:

each of X^1, X^2, and X^3 is independently selected from hydroxy, lower alkoxy, lower acyloxy, keto, and a glycoside;

OR^1 is selected from hydroxy, lower alkoxy, lower acyloxy, and a glycoside;

wherein any of the hydroxyl groups on said glycoside may be substituted with a further glycoside, lower alkyl, or lower acyl, such that the compound includes a maximum of three glycosides; and

R^2 is methyl and ---- represents a double bond between carbons 9 and 11; or, R^2 forms, together with carbon 9, a fused cyclopropyl ring, and ---- represents a single bond between carbons 9 and 11;

and wherein said formulation further comprises an ingredient selected from the group consisting of an emulsifier, a surfactant, a thickener, a skin emollient, and a lubricant, and an ingredient selected from the group consisting of a preservative, an antioxidant, and an antimicrobial agent.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said compound includes zero, one, or two glycosides, none of which is substituted with a further glycoside.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said compound includes zero or two glycosides, none of which is substituted with a further glycoside.

4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein each said glycoside, when present, is of the D configuration.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein R^2 forms, together with carbon 9, a fused cyclopropyl ring; and ---- represents a single bond between carbons 9 and 11.

6. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein each of X^1 and X^2 is independently selected from hydroxy, lower alkoxy, lower acyloxy, and a glycoside, and X^3 is selected from hydroxy, lower alkoxy, lower acyloxy, keto, and a glycoside.

7. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein X^1 is OH or a glycoside, each of X^2 and OR^1 is independently OH or a glycoside, and X^3 is OH or keto.

8. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the compound is selected from astragaloside IV, cycloastragenol, astragenol, astragaloside IV 16-one, cycloastragenol 6-β-D-glucopyranoside, and cycloastragenol 3-β-D-xylopyranoside.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the compound is selected from astragaloside IV, cycloastragenol, astragenol, and astragaloside IV 16-one.

10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 9, wherein said compound is astragaloside IV.

11-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the concentration of said compound in said formulation is from 0.01 to 5% (w/v).

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein said concentration is from 0.01 to 1% (w/v).

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the concentration of said compound in said formulation is greater than 0.005% and less than 0.1% (w/v).

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the formulation further comprises one or more additional ingredients selected from the group consisting of an emulsifier, a thickener, and a skin emollient.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the formulation comprises one or more ingredients selected from an emulsifier and a skin emollient.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the formulation comprises a skin emollient.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the biological activity of said compound is such that a composition containing the compound at a concentration of 1 μg/ml or less is effective to produce a telomerase activity at least 25% greater than observed in a vehicle control, as measured in a TRAP assay of keratinocyte or fibroblast cells.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the biological activity of said compound is such that a composition containing the compound at a concentration of 1 μg/ml or less is effective to produce an amount of cell reconfluence in a scratch assay of keratinocytes which is at least 25% greater than that seen in untreated or other control cells.